# Dhammapada

## The Way of Truth

Translated from the Pali by Sangharakshita

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# Preface

The Buddha was born towards the end of the fifth century BCE, renounced the world at the age of twenty-nine, attained Enlightenment six years later, and spent the remaining forty-five years of his life communicating the Truth he had discovered to anyone who was willing to learn.

He communicated that Truth orally, by means of the spoken word, though many people were also deeply moved by his mere presence. His words made a deep impression on his hearers, so that some of them remembered them all their lives and both before and after his death repeated them for the benefit of others. In this way there sprang up and developed an *oral tradition*, which not only preserved the Buddha's teaching but organized, edited, and amplified it in various ways. The process of oral transmission lasted for several hundred years and probably it was not until the first century BCE that the Buddha's discourses and sayings began to be committed to writing.

By this time that tradition had become very rich, the more especially as it now included exegetical and commentarial material by several successive generations of the Buddha's followers. By this time, too, those followers had become divided into a number of different schools, each of which transmitted, in its own language, its own particular version of orally transmitted material. When the oral tradition of the Buddha's teaching came finally to be written down, therefore, it was written down in at least four different languages or dialects, one of them being the language now known as Pali.

This Pali version of the oral tradition, which was committed to writing in Sri Lanka in the first century BCE by members of the Theravada School, is the only version of that material to have survived complete in the original language, and as such it is of enormous historical and spiritual importance. It is divided into three *pitakas* or 'baskets', a basket of monastic rules, a basket of discourses, and a basket of further teaching, the last being actually the work of latter-day followers. The basket of discourses or Sutta Pitaka is divided into five collections, the fifth of which is the *Khuddaka-Nikaya* or 'Little Collection'. The 'Little Collection' consists of fifteen separate works, some very long and some quite short. The *Dhammapada* is one of these.

Though none of the other literary versions of the oral tradition has survived complete in the original language, a handful of separate works, or portions of works, fortunately are still available to us. Thus in addition to the Pali *Dhammapada* we have a Prakrit *Dhamapada* and a Sanskrit *Dharmapada* (also known as the *Udanavarga*). The Chinese Buddhist Canon also contains four

texts of this name, all translated from different Sanskrit originals. Such comparative studies as have so far been made reveal no basic discrepancies among the various recensions of the work, whether Pali, Prakrit, or Sanskrit. As I have written elsewhere, 'All consist of the same type of material organized in the same way, that is to say, of verses embodying ethical and spiritual precepts grouped more or less according to subject under various sectional headings. Though the total number of verses is not the same, and though the selection of verses, as well as the number and nature of the sections into which they are classified, differ considerably from one text to another, all the *Dhammapadas* have certain blocks of verses in common. Some of these blocks are found elsewhere in the Sutra Pitaka; others appear to be peculiar to the *Dhammapada* literature. It would seem, therefore, that taking these blocks, which together constituted the basic text,… each of the early schools composed a *Dhammapada* of its own.'

That the Pali *Dhammapada* is at present the best known of this class of Buddhist canonical texts is largely the result of historical accident. Since its appearance in a Latin version in 1855 it has been repeatedly translated into the principal European and Asian languages, 'the depth and universality of its doctrine, the purity and earnestness of its moral teaching, and the sublimity of its spiritual ideal, combined with the refined simplicity and pellucid poetical beauty of its language, winning for it an honoured place in world literature.' Small wonder, then, that the *Dhammapada* should now be one of the best known and best loved of all Buddhist scriptures, or that for many Western Buddhists, irrespective of school, it should be a perpetual source of inspiration.

For me it has been a source of inspiration, encouragement, and guidance for well over fifty years. Indeed, I sometimes think that the *Dhammapada* contains, at least in principle, as much of the Buddha's teaching as most of us really need to know in order to progress towards Enlightenment. As the Buddha himself tells us in verse 100, 'Better than a thousand meaningless words collected together (in the Vedic oral tradition) is a single meaningful word on hearing which one becomes tranquil.' There are many such meaningful words in the *Dhammapada* – words that are of infinitely greater value than the tens of thousands of meaningless words we hear every day of our lives.

Four episodes in the history of my relationship with the *Dhammapada* stand out with particular vividness.

The first occurred in 1944. I had just arrived in Delhi, and being already a Buddhist went looking for a Buddhist temple. Eventually I found one, the first I had ever seen. Inside the entrance there was a bookstall, and among the books I bought that day was an English translation of the *Dhammapada* complete with the Pali text in Devanagari script. Thereafter the orange-covered pocket volume accompanied me to Sri Lanka, to Singapore, and then back to India, where it was the constant companion of my years as a freelance wandering ascetic.

It is to those years of wandering that the next episode belongs. I was staying at a Hindu ashram in North Malabar, and during my stay devoted the period of my morning walk to learning the *Dhammapada* by heart in the original Pali, reciting the verses out loud as I strode along the road. As I knew no Pali, though I had learned the Devanagari script while in Sri Lanka, I had to recite the verses parrot-fashion with only a general idea of their meaning. At that time I was a great believer in the value of learning scriptures and poetry by heart, as I still am today.

The third episode in the history of my relationship with the *Dhammapada* finds me living in Benares with the venerable Jagdish Kashyap, my first teacher, with whom I studied Pali, Abhidharma, and Logic. One of the texts I studied with him was the *Dhammapada*. Though I never became a Pali scholar, as Kashyap- ji perhaps hoped I might, I at least managed to acquire from him a knowledge of the language sufficient to enable me, many years later, to attempt a *Dhammapada* translation of my own.

The last of these episodes took place in Poona, not long before my return to the West in 1964. In 1956 hundreds of thousands of Hindus who had been treated as Untouchables by members of the higher castes converted to Buddhism, and since then I had spent much of my time travelling from place to place throughout Central and Western India teaching them the fundamentals of the Dharma. On one of my visits to Poona I conducted a four-week training course in Buddhism, in the context of which I gave a running commentary on all twenty-six chapters of the *Dhammapada*. Few, if any, of the participants had encountered the *Dhammapada* before, and I was deeply moved to see the effect the inspired words of the Buddha had on them all, including the uneducated and even illiterate. They could well have exclaimed, as did so many in the Buddha's own day, that it was as though what was overthrown was raised up, or what was hidden revealed, or the way pointed out to him that wandered astray, or a light held up in the darkness so that those that had eyes might see.

During the seventies and eighties, back in England, I led seminars on different chapters of the *Dhammapada*, though without ever covering the entire work as I had done in Poona. It was at this time, and in connection with those seminars, that I started translating the *Dhammapada* and got about a third of the way through the text. Circumstances then obliged me to put the work aside for a while, and as in the interval several new translations of the *Dhammapada* had appeared I eventually concluded there was no need for me to finish mine. Copies of the chapters I had translated did, however, circulate in duplicated form among friends and disciples, many of whom assured me that they found my version of these chapters more useful than any other. They also urged me to finish the work of translating the remaining chapters and in the end I promised to do so. This promise I redeemed last year, here in the peace and solitude of the green valley that is Guhyaloka, and in this way, totally

immersed as I was in the inspired words of the Buddha, spent one of the happiest months of my life.

There have been more than thirty English translations of the *Dhammapada* or Way of Truth, or Footfalls of the Law, or Statement of Principles, as the work has been variously called, and it might have been thought that notwithstanding the urgings of friends and disciples another one was hardly necessary. But of a text like the *Dhammapada* there cannot be too many translations, not only because the more translations there are the more widely the work is likely to be known but because no single translation can fully exhaust the meaning of the original. In this present version I have striven not only to be accurate but, in particular, to reproduce the directness and sense of urgency I detect in many of the verses – a directness and sense of urgency which most other translations entirely fail to capture. At times, indeed, it is as though the Buddha is speaking personally to us across the centuries, reminding us of our faults, encouraging us to persevere, and pointing out the ultimate Goal. For this reason I have not burdened the translation with a commentary, so that to the extent that the exigencies of translation permit there should be nothing to stand between the reader and the Buddha.

A few words about the way in which I have translated certain key terms may not be out of place.

Originally I had rendered the word *arahant* as 'the New Man', but since then the expression has been so seriously devalued that I have had to drop it. Instead, I have translated *arahant*, more literally, as 'the (Supremely) Worthy One', the bracketed adverb and initial capitals indicating that inasmuch as an Arahant is one who has attained Nirvana or Enlightenment, he (or she) is 'worthy' in the highest possible sense. The term *bhikkhu* is often translated 'monk', but this rendering I have avoided, partly because the word 'monk' is so overlaid with Christian connotations as to be quite misleading when used in a Buddhist context and partly because of the confusion that has been created by the appearance, in recent years, of Zen 'married monks' of both sexes. The literal meaning of *bhikkhu* is one who lives on alms, and I have therefore translated it as 'almsman'. Though *brahmana* is a multivalent term, and as such difficult to translate by any one word, its meaning within the context of the *Dhammapada* is reasonably clear, and I have therefore left it untranslated, except that in the few instances where it refers to a member of the Vedic priestly caste I have given it in its anglicized form. The term *samana*, literally 'one who strives (spiritually)', is quite accurately rendered by 'ascetic', which is the usual translation, but in order to emphasize the latter's ultimate derivation from the Greek *askeon*, 'to exercise', and to dissociate it from any suggestion of self-mortification, I have spelt the word with a 'k' instead of with a 'c'.

The terms *bala* and *pandita* designate two contrasting types of persons – 'the fool' and 'the wise', as they are usually translated. *Bala*, however, means not so

much a fool as one who is childish, lacking in moral sense. I have therefore translated *bala* as 'the (spiritually) immature person' and *pandita*, accordingly, as 'the (spiritually) mature person'. *Dhammattha* has been rendered as 'the man of principle' rather than as 'the righteous' in order to avoid the latter word's rather biblical overtones.

Now that it is at last finished, this latest translation of the *Dhammapada* goes forth from the secluded, peaceful valley where most of the work on it has been done into a world which is far from peaceful. It goes forth, in particular, into a Western world increasingly dominated by the forces of greed, as represented by consumerism, hatred, as represented by ruthless economic competition, and delusion, as represented by a variety of ideologies from scientism to religious fundamentalism. Thus it goes forth into a world greatly in need of the qualities of simplicity, contentment, kindness, gentleness, serenity, and self-control inculcated by the Buddha in the *Dhammapada* – qualities that lead, in the long run, to the enjoyment of that vision of the Truth which alone can satisfy the deepest longings of the human heart. May this present translation play a part in making those qualities more widespread and more active among us.

Sangharakshita
Guhyaloka
Spain
31 July 2000

i

# Pairs

1

1. Experiences are preceded by mind, led by mind, and produced by mind. If one speaks or acts with an impure mind, suffering follows even as the cart-wheel follows the hoof of the ox (drawing the cart).

2

2. Experiences are preceded by mind, led by mind, and produced by mind. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness follows like a shadow that never departs.

3

3. Those who entertain such thoughts as ‘He abused me, he beat me, he conquered me, he robbed me,’ will not still their hatred.

4

4. Those who do not entertain such thoughts as ‘He abused me, he beat me, he conquered me, he robbed me,’ will still their hatred.

5

5. Not by hatred are hatreds ever pacified here (in the world). They are pacified by love. This is the eternal law.

6

6. Others do not realize that we are all heading for death. Those who do realize it will compose their quarrels.

7

7. As the wind blows down a weak tree, so Mara[1] overthrows one who lives seeing the (unlovely as) lovely, whose senses are uncontrolled, who is immoderate in food, lazy, and of inferior vigour.

8

8. As the wind does not blow down the rocky mountain peak, so Mara does not overthrow one who lives seeing the (unlovely as) unlovely, whose senses are controlled, who is moderate in food, and whose faith and vigour are aroused.

9

9. He is not worthy of the yellow robe who takes it (while still) not free from impurity, and lacking in self-restraint and truth.

10

10. He is worthy of the yellow robe who has made an end to all impurity, who is well established in virtuous conduct (*sila*), and who is endowed with self-restraint and truth.

11

11. Those who take the unreal for the real, and who in the real see the unreal, they, wandering in the sphere of wrong thought, will not attain the real.

12

12. Those who have known the real as the real, and the unreal as the unreal, they, moving in the sphere of right thought, will attain the real.

13

13. As the rain penetrates the badly thatched house, so lust enters the (spiritually) undeveloped mind.

14

14. As the rain does not penetrate into the well-thatched house, so lust does not enter the (spiritually) well-developed mind.

15

15. The evildoer grieves in both worlds; he grieves ‘here’ and he grieves ‘there’.[2] He suffers and torments himself seeing his own foul deeds.

16

16. The doer of good rejoices in both (worlds); he rejoices ‘here’ and he rejoices ‘there’. He rejoices and is glad seeing his own pure deeds.

17

17. The evildoer burns in both (worlds); he burns ‘here’ and he burns ‘there’. He burns (with remorse) thinking he has done evil, and he burns (with suffering) having gone (after death) to an evil state.

18

18. The doer of good delights in both (worlds); he delights ‘here’ and he delights ‘there’. He delights (in this life) thinking he has done good and he delights (after death) having gone to a state of happiness.

19

19. He who for his own benefit constantly recites the (canonical) literature[3] but does not act accordingly, that heedless man, like a cowherd that counts the cows of others, is not enriched by the asketic life.

20

20. He who for his own benefit recites even a little of the (canonical) literature but lives in accordance with its principles, abandoning craving, hatred, and delusion, possessed of right knowledge, with mind well freed, clinging to nothing in this or any other world, *he* is enriched by the asketic life.

# Mindfulness

1

21. Mindfulness is the Way to the Immortal,[4] unmindfulness the way to death. Those who are mindful do not die, (whereas) the unmindful are like the dead.

2

22. Knowing the distinction of mindfulness the spiritually mature (*panditas*) rejoice in mindfulness and take delight in the sphere of the Noble Ones (*ariyas*).

3

23. Absorbed in superconscious states (*jhanas*), recollected, and ever exerting themselves, those wise ones (*dhiras*) realize Nirvana, the unsurpassed security.

4

24. Whoever is energetic, recollected, pure in conduct, considerate, self-restrained, of righteous life, and mindful, the glory of such a one waxes exceedingly.

5

25. By means of energy, mindfulness, self-restraint, and control, let the man of understanding (*medhavi*) make (for himself) an island that no flood can overwhelm.

6

26. Out of their evil understanding the spiritually immature (*balas*) abandon themselves to unmindfulness. The man of understanding guards mindfulness as his chief treasure.

7

27. Do not abandon yourselves to unmindfulness; have no intimacy with sensuous delights. The mindful person, absorbed in superconscious states, gains ample bliss.

8

28. As a dweller in the mountains looks down on those who live in the valley, so the spiritually mature person, the hero free from sorrow, having driven out

unmindfulness by means of mindfulness, ascends to the Palace of Wisdom and looks down at the sorrowful, spiritually immature multitude (below).

9

29. Mindful among the unmindful, wide awake among the sleeping, the man of good understanding forges ahead like a swift horse outdistancing a feeble hack.

10

30. By means of mindfulness, Maghava (i.e., Indra) attained to the chieftaincy of the gods. Mindfulness is always praised, unmindfulness always despised.

11

31. The almsman (*bhikkhu*) who delights in mindfulness (and) who regards unmindfulness with fear advances like fire, burning up fetters gross and subtle.

12

32. The almsman who delights in mindfulness (and) who regards unmindfulness with fear is not liable to regression. He is in the presence of Nirvana.

iii

# The Mind

1

33. As a fletcher straightens the arrow, so the man of understanding makes straight the trembling unsteady mind, which is difficult to guard (and) difficult to restrain.

2

34. As a fish threshes from side to side when taken from one abode to another and cast on dry land, so the mind throbs and vibrates (with the strain) as it abandons the domain of Mara.

3

35. (The mind) is frivolous and difficult to control, alighting on whatever it pleases. It is good to tame the mind. A tamed mind brings happiness.

4

36. The mind is extremely subtle and difficult to grasp, alighting on whatever it pleases. Let the man of understanding keep watch over the mind. A guarded mind brings happiness.

5

37. Far-ranging and lone-faring is the mind, incorporeal and abiding in the cave (of the heart). Those who bring it under control are freed from the bonds of Mara.

6

38. His wisdom does not attain to perfection whose mind is unsettled, who is ignorant of the Real Truth (*saddhamma*), and whose faith wavers.

7

39. There is no fear for someone who is awake, whose mind is uncontaminated by craving, (and) unperplexed, (and) who has given up vice and virtue.

8

40. Perceiving the body to be (fragile) like a clay pot, (and) fortifying the mind as though it were a city, with the sword of wisdom make war on Mara. Free from attachment, keep watch over what has been won.

9

41. Before long, this body, devoid of consciousness, will lie rejected on the ground like a useless faggot.

10

42. Whatever foe may do to foe, or hater to hater, greater is the harm done (to oneself) by a wrongly directed mind.

11

43. Neither mother nor father, nor any other relative, can do one as much good as a perfectly directed mind.

iv

# Flowers

1

44. Who shall conquer the earth and the Realm of Death with its deities? Who shall make out the well-taught Verses of Truth as an expert picks flowers?

2

45. The Learner (of the Transcendental Path) shall conquer the Realm of Death with its deities. The Learner shall make out the well-taught Verses of Truth as an expert picks flowers.

3

46. Seeing the body as froth, (and) thoroughly comprehending its mirage-nature, let one proceed unseen by the King of Death, having broken the flower-tipped arrows[5] of Mara.

4

47. As a great flood carries away a sleeping village, so death bears off the man who, possessed of longing, plucks only the flowers (of existence).

5

48. The Destroyer brings under his sway the man who, possessed by longing, plucks only the flowers (of existence), (and) who is insatiable in sexual passions.

6

49. Let the silent sage move about in the village as the bee goes taking honey from the flower without harming colour or fragrance.

7

50. One should pay no heed to the faults of others, what they have done and not done. Rather should one consider the things that one has oneself done and not done.

8

51. Like a beautiful flower, brightly coloured but without scent, even so useless is the well-uttered speech of one who does not act accordingly.

9

52. Like a beautiful flower, brightly coloured and scented, even so useful is the well-uttered speech of one who acts accordingly.

10

53. As many garlands are made from a heap of flowers, so one who is a mortal born should perform many ethically skilful deeds.

11

54. The fragrance of flowers, of sandalwood, of aromatic resin or jasmine, does not go against the wind, (whereas) the fragrance of the good does go against the wind.

12

55. Sandalwood or aromatic resin, blue lotus, or wild jasmine, of all these kinds of fragrance, the odour of virtue is unsurpassed.

13

56. Insignificant in comparison is this fragrance of aromatic resin and sandalwood. The fragrance of virtue it is that blows among the gods as the highest.

14

57. Mara does not find the path of those who are virtuous, who live mindfully, and who are freed through Perfect Knowledge (*sammadanna*).

15

58. As pink lotuses, sweet-scented and lovely, spring from a heap of rubbish thrown in the highway,

16

59. so among those who have become (as) rubbish, (among) ignorant, ordinary people, the Disciple of the Perfectly Enlightened One shines forth exceedingly in wisdom.

V

# The Spiritually Immature

1

60. Long is the night to the wakeful, long the league to one who is exhausted (with travel). Long is the process of faring (through repeated existences) to those spiritually immature ones who do not know the real truth (*saddhamma*).

2

61. If he who goes about (in search of truth) does not find one better than or (at least) similar to himself, let him firmly lead a solitary life. There is no companionship (for him) with the spiritually immature.

3

62. The spiritually immature person vexes himself (thinking) 'Sons are mine, riches are mine'. He himself is not his own, even; how then sons? how then riches?

4

63. The spiritually immature person who recognizes his immaturity is to that extent mature; the spiritually immature one who thinks of himself as mature is termed immature indeed.

5

64. Though throughout his life a spiritually immature person attends upon (or: honours) one who is spiritually mature, he does not necessarily know the truth, any more than the spoon knows the taste of the soup.

6

65. If for a moment a wise man attends upon one who is spiritually mature, he quickly perceives the truth, as the tongue at once detects the taste of the soup.

7

66. Of evil understanding, the spiritually immature live as enemies to themselves, committing sinful deeds, the consequences of which are bitter.

8

67. That deed is not well done which, being done, one repents, (and) the result of which one suffers with tearful face and lamentations.

9

68. That deed is well done which, being done, one does not repent, (and) the result of which one receives gladly.

10

69. So long as it has not ripened, the spiritually immature one thinks sin as sweet as honey; (but) when sin does ripen, then the spiritually immature one suffers a downfall.

11

70. Month after month, a spiritually immature person may eat his food with the tip of a blade of (sacred) kusa-grass,[6] (yet) his worth is not a fraction (lit., not a sixteenth part) of those who have ascertained the truth.

12

71. Unlike milk, which flows[7] immediately (the teat is sucked), the sin that has been committed does not at once bear fruit. (Instead) it pursues the spiritually immature person like a fire covered with ashes, burning him (only after a time).

13

72. The spiritually immature person wins (theoretical religious) knowledge only to his own disadvantage; it destroys his better nature while splitting his head.

14

73. One who is spiritually immature desires a false reputation, honour among fellow almsmen, authority over monastic settlements, and respect from the families (living) round about.

15

74. ‘Let both those householders and those who have gone forth (from the household life) approve what I have done; let them be subject to me in all undertakings, great and small.’ Such is the wish of the spiritually immature, (as a result of which) his craving and conceit increase.

16

75. One thing is that which leads to (worldly) gain; quite another the way that leads to Nirvana. Thus comprehending, let the almsman, the disciple of the Buddha, take no delight in respectful greetings, but devote himself to solitude.

# The Spiritually Mature

1

76. Should one see a man of understanding who, as if indicating a (buried) treasure, points out faults and administers reproof, let one associate with such a spiritually mature person. To associate with one like this is good, not evil.

2

77. Let him instruct, let him advise, let him restrain (one) from uncivilized behaviour, (and the result will be that) he will be dear to the good and detestable to the bad.

3

78. Do not associate with evil friends; do not associate with low fellows. Associate with spiritual friends; associate with superior men (*purisuttamas*).

4

79. One who has imbibed the Truth lives happily with well-seeing mind. The spiritually mature person delights in the Truth made known by the Noble (*ariyas*).

5

80. Irrigators draw off waters; fletchers straighten arrows; carpenters shape wood; the spiritually mature discipline themselves.

6

81. As a solid rock cannot be shaken by the wind, so the spiritually mature person is unmoved by praise or blame.

7

82. Hearing the Truth of Things, the spiritually mature win insight like a deep lake (suddenly) becoming clear and undisturbed.

8

83. True men give up everything; the righteous do not speak wishing for sensuous pleasures. Touched now by pleasure, now by pain, the spiritually mature show neither elation nor depression.

9

84. Not for one's own sake, nor for the sake of others, should one desire sons, wealth, or territory; one should not desire success for oneself by unrighteous means. He (who behaves in such a way) is virtuous, is wise, is righteous.

10

85. Few among men are those who go to the Further Shore. The other (ordinary) people chase up and down this shore.

11

86. Those people who conform themselves to the well-explained Truth of Things and who are desirous of (reaching) the Further Shore will pass over the Realm of Death, so difficult to transcend.

12

87. Forsaking dark ways, the spiritually mature person cultivates the bright. Coming from home to the homeless (life), he (abides) in solitude (which) is hard to enjoy.

13

88. Giving up delight in sensuous pleasures the spiritually mature person, the man-of-no-possessions, should purify himself from (all) mental defilements.

14

89. They whose minds have cultivated to perfection the Factors of Enlightenment[8] and who, free from clinging, delight in the giving up of attachment, those bias-free radiant ones become Cool (*nibbuta*) even in this world (i.e., in this life).

vii

# The (Supremely) Worthy

1

90. The burning fever of passion does not exist for one who has finished his journey (i.e., completed his spiritual evolution), who is free from sorrow, wholly emancipated, and released from all the bonds (of conditionality).

2

91. The mindful who leave home do not delight in an abode; like wild geese quitting a lake, they abandon whatever security they have.

3

92. Those who do not accumulate (material or mental possessions), who thoroughly understand (the true nature of) the food they eat, and whose range of experience (lit., pasture) is liberation through (the realization of) the Empty (*sunna*) and Unconditioned (*animitta*), their path, like that of birds in the sky, is difficult to trace.

4

93. He whose impurities are extinct, who is not attached to food, and whose range of experience (lit., pasture) is liberation through (the realization of) the Empty (*sunna*) and Unconditioned (*animitta*), his path, like that of birds in the sky, is difficult to trace.

5

94. He whose senses are pacified like horses well controlled by the charioteer, who has eradicated conceit and who is free from impurities – the very gods love a man of such (good) qualities (as these).

6

95. Like the earth, he offers no opposition; like the main pillar (of the city gate), he stands firm. He is (pure) like a lake free from mud. For a man of such (good) qualities (as these) there are no more wanderings (from life to life).

7

96. Tranquil is the thought, tranquil the word and deed, of that supremely tranquil person who is emancipated through Perfect Knowledge.

8

97. He is a superior man (*uttamaporiso*) who does not (merely) believe (but) who knows the Unmade, who has severed all links (with conditioned existence), put an end to the occasions (of good and evil), and who has renounced (lit., vomited up) all worldly hopes.

9

98. Whether village or forest, plain or hill, delightful is that spot where the (Supremely) Worthy dwell.

10

99. Delightful are the forests where ordinary people find no pleasure. Those who are free from passion delight (in them), (for) they do not go in quest of sensuous enjoyment.

# The Thousands

1

100. Better than a thousand meaningless words collected together (in the Vedic oral tradition) is a single meaningful word on hearing which one becomes tranquil.

2

101. Better than a thousand meaningless verses collected together (in the Vedic oral tradition) is one (meaningful) line of verse on hearing which one becomes tranquil.

3

102. Though one should recite a hundred (Vedic) verses, (verses) without meaning, better is one line (or: a single word) of Dhamma on hearing which one becomes tranquil.

4

103. Though one should conquer in battle thousands upon thousands of men, yet he who conquers himself is (truly) the greatest in battle.

5

104. It is indeed better to conquer oneself than to conquer other people. Of a man who has subdued himself, (and) who lives (self-)controlled,

6

105. neither a god nor a celestial musician (*gandhabba*), nor Mara together with Brahma, can undo the victory – the victory of a person who is (subdued and controlled) like that.

7

106. If month after month for a hundred years one should offer sacrifices by the thousand, and if for a single moment one should venerate a (spiritually) developed person, better is that (act of) veneration than the hundred years (of sacrifices).

8

107. Though one should tend the sacred fire in the forest for a hundred years, yet if he venerates a (spiritually) developed person even for a moment, better is that (act of) veneration than the hundred years (spent tending the sacred fire).

9

108. Whatever oblations and sacrifices one might offer here on earth in the course of the whole (Vedic) religious year, seeking to gain merit thereby, all that is not a quarter (as meritorious) as paying respect to those who live uprightly, which is (indeed) excellent.

10

109. For him who is of a reverential disposition, four things constantly increase: life, beauty, happiness, and strength.

11

110. Though one should live a hundred years unethical and unintegrated (*asamahita*), better is one single day lived ethically and absorbed (in higher meditative states).

12

111. Though one should live a hundred years of evil understanding and unintegrated, better is one single day lived possessed of wisdom and absorbed (in higher meditative states).

13

112. Better than a hundred years lived lazily and with inferior energy is one single day lived with energy aroused and fortified.

14

113. Better than a hundred years lived unaware of the rise and fall (of conditioned things) is one single day lived aware of the rise and fall (of conditioned things).

15

114. Better than a hundred years lived unaware of the Deathless State is one single day lived aware of the Deathless State.

16

115. Better than a hundred years lived unaware of the Supreme Truth (*dhammam uttamam*) is one single day lived aware of the Supreme Truth.

ix

# Evil

1

116. Be quick to do what is (morally) beautiful. Restrain the mind from evil. He who is sluggish in doing good, his mind delights in evil.

2

117. Should a man (once) do evil, let him not make a habit of it; let him not set his heart on it. Painful is the heaping up of evil.

3

118. Should a man (once) do good, let him make a habit of it; let him set his heart on it. Happy is the heaping up of good.

4

119. As long as it bears no fruit, so long the evildoer sees the evil (he has done) as good. When it bears fruit (in the form of suffering) he recognizes it as evil.

5

120. As long as it bears no fruit, so long the good man sees (the good he has done) as evil. When it bears fruit (in the form of happiness), then he recognizes it as good.

6

121. Do not underestimate evil, (thinking) ‘It will not approach me.’ A water-pot becomes full by the (constant) falling of drops of water. (Similarly) the spiritually immature person little by little fills himself with evil.

7

122. Do not underestimate good, (thinking) ‘It will not approach me.’ A water-pot becomes full by the (constant) falling of drops of water. (Similarly) the wise man little by little fills himself with good.

8

123. As a merchant (travelling) with a small caravan and much wealth avoids a dangerous road, or as one desirous of life shuns poison, so should one keep clear of evil.

9

124. If one has no wound in one’s hand one may (safely) handle poison. The unwounded hand is not affected by poison. (Similarly) no evil befalls him who does no wrong.

10

125. Whoever offends against an innocent man, one who is pure and faultless, to that spiritually immature person the evil (he has committed) comes back like fine dust thrown against the wind.

11

126. Some (beings) arise (by way of conception) in the womb. Evildoers are born in a state of woe. Those who do good go to heaven. Those who are free from defilements become utterly ‘Cool’.

12

127. Not in the sky, nor in the midst of the sea, nor yet in the clefts of the mountains, nowhere in the world (in fact) is there any place to be found where, having entered, one can abide free from (the consequences of) one’s evil deeds.

13

128. Not in the sky, nor in the midst of the sea, nor yet in the clefts of mountains, nowhere in the world (in fact) is there any place to be found where, having entered, one will not be overcome by death.

X

# Punishment

1

129. All (living beings) are terrified of punishment (*danda*); all fear death. Making comparison (of others) with oneself, one should neither kill nor cause to kill.

2

130. All (living beings) are terrified of punishment (*danda*); to all, life is dear. Making comparison (of others) with oneself, one should neither kill nor cause to kill.

3

131. Whoever torments with the stick (*danda*) creatures desirous of happiness, he himself thereafter, seeking happiness, will not obtain happiness.

4

132. Whoever does not torment with the stick (*danda*) creatures desirous of happiness, he himself thereafter, seeking happiness, will obtain happiness.

5

133. Do not speak roughly to anyone: those thus spoken to will answer back. Painful indeed is angry talk, (as a result of which) one will experience retribution.

6

134. If you (can) silence yourself like a shattered metal plate you have already attained Nirvana: no anger is found in you.

7

135. As a cowherd drives cows out to pasture with a stick, so do old age and death drive the life out of living beings.

8

136. A spiritually immature person performs evil deeds not realizing (their true nature). By his own actions is the man of evil understanding tormented (lit., burned) as though consumed by fire.

9

137. Whoever inflicts punishment on the innocent, (or) who offends against the unoffending, he speedily falls into one of the ten states:

10

138. He meets either with intense physical pain, or material loss, or bodily injury, or serious illness, or mental derangement;

11

139. Or (he meets with) trouble from the Government or a serious accusation, or bereavement, or loss of wealth:

12

140. Or else his houses are consumed by fire, (while) on the dissolution of the body that man of evil understanding is reborn in a state of woe.

13

141. Not going about naked, not (the wearing of) matted locks, not abstention from food, not sleeping on the (bare) ground, not (smearing the body with) dust and ashes, nor yet (the practice of) squatting (on the balls of the feet), can purify a mortal who has not overcome his doubts.

14

142. If one who is richly adorned lives in tranquillity, is calm, controlled, assured (of eventual enlightenment), and devotes himself to the spiritual life, laying down the stick with regard to all living beings, then (despite his being richly adorned), he is a brahmana, he is an asketic, he is an almsman.

15

143. In the (whole) world is there a man to be found who, restrained by a sense of shame, avoids censure as a good horse avoids the whip?

16

144. Like a good horse touched by the whip, be zealous and stirred by profound religious emotion. By means of faith, upright conduct, energy, concentration (*samadhi*), and investigation of the Truth, (as well as by being) endowed with (spiritual) knowledge and (righteous) behaviour, and by being mindful, leave this great suffering behind.

17

145. Irrigators draw off the waters; fletchers straighten arrows; carpenters shape wood; righteous men discipline themselves.

xi

# Decay

1

146. What mirth can there be, what pleasure, when all the time (everything) is blazing (with the threefold fire of suffering, impermanence, and insubstantiality)? Covered (though you are) in blind darkness, you do not seek a light!

2

147. Look at this painted doll (i.e., the body), this pretentious mass of sores, wretched and full of cravings (or: much hankered after), nothing of which is stable or lasting!

3

148. Wasted away is this body, a nest of disease, and perishable. The putrid mass breaks up: death is the end of life.

4

149. When like gourds in autumn these dove-grey bones lie here discarded, what pleasure (can one take) in looking at them?

5

150. (The body) is a city built of bones and plastered with flesh and blood, (a city) wherein lie concealed decay and death, pride and hypocrisy.

6

151. Even the richly decorated royal chariots (in time) wear out; likewise the body also perishes. (But) the Truth (*dhamma*) of the mindful does not perish, (for) those who are tranquil (*santa*) speak of it to the well-bred (*sabbhi*).

7

152. The man of little learning lives like a stalled ox: his flesh increases but his wisdom does not.

8

153. Many a birth have I undergone in this (process of) faring on (in the round of conditioned existence), seeking the builder of the house and not finding him. Painful is (such) repeated birth.

9

154. House-builder, (now) you are seen! Never again shall you build (me) a house. Your rafters are all broken, your ridgepole shattered. The (conditioned) mind too has gone to destruction: one has attained to the cessation of craving.[9]

10

155. Those who have not led the spiritual life (*brahmacariya*), or obtained the wealth (of merit) in their youth, (such as these) brood over the past like aged herons in a pond without fish.

11

156. Those who have not led the spiritual life (*brahmacariya*), or obtained the wealth (of merit) in their youth, (such as these) lie like worn-out arrows, lamenting the things of old.

# Self

1

157. If a man (really) regards himself as dear, let him well and truly protect himself. During one or another of the three watches (of the night) the spiritually mature person should keep wide awake.

2

158. First establish yourself in what is suitable, then advise others. The spiritually mature person should not besmirch himself (by acting otherwise).

3

159. Should you act as you advise others to act, then it would be (a case of) one who was (self-) controlled exercising control (over others). The self is truly difficult to control.

4

160. One is indeed one’s own saviour (or: protector). What other saviour should there be? With oneself well-controlled, one finds a saviour (who is) hard to find.

5

161. The evil done by oneself, born of oneself, produced by oneself, destroys the man of evil understanding as a diamond pulverizes a piece of rock crystal.

6

162. He whose unprincipled behaviour is without limit, like a maluva(-creeper) overspreading a sal tree, does to his own self that which his enemy wishes (to do to him).

7

163. Easily done are things which are bad and not beneficial to oneself. What is (both) beneficial and good, that is exceedingly difficult to do.

8

164. The man of evil understanding who, on account of his (wrong) views, obstructs (or: rejects) the message of the (Supremely) Worthy, the noble ones,

the men of authentic life, that wicked person, like a katthak(-reed), brings forth fruit (i.e., performs actions) to his own destruction.

9

165. A man besmirches himself by the evil he personally commits. (Similarly) he purifies himself by personally abstaining from evil. Purity and impurity are matters of personal experience: one man cannot purify another.

10

166. (Consequently) one should not neglect one’s own (spiritual) welfare for the welfare of others, great as that may be. Clearly perceiving (what constitutes) one’s personal welfare, one should devote oneself to one’s own good.

# xiii

## The World

1

167. Don’t follow inferior principles. Don’t live heedlessly. Don’t entertain false views. Don’t be one who (by following inferior principles etc.) keeps the world going.

2

168. Get up! Don’t be heedless! Live practising the Dhamma, (the Dhamma) which is good conduct. One who lives practising the Dhamma (*dhammacari*) dwells happily (both) in this world and the other (world).

3

169. Live practising the Dhamma. Do not live behaving badly. One who lives practising the Dhamma (*dhammacari*) dwells happily (both) in this world and the other (world).

4

170. Look upon (the world) as a bubble; look upon (it) as a mirage. The King of Death does not see one who looks upon the world in this way.

5

171. Come, (just) look at this world, which is like a decorated royal chariot in which the spiritually immature sink down (or: are dejected), but (with regard to which) there is no attachment on the part of those who really know.

6

172. One who having formerly been heedless later is not heedless, lights up the world like the moon (when) freed from clouds.

7

173. One who covers over the evil deeds he has done with (ethically) skilful actions, lights up this world like the moon (when) freed from clouds.

8

174. This world is (mentally) blinded; few see clearly. Few are those who, like birds freed from the net, go to heaven.

9

175. Swans fly on the path of the sun.[10] Those with supernormal powers travel through the air. The wise, having conquered Mara and his army, are led (away) from the world.

10

176. There is no wrong that cannot be committed by a lying person who has transgressed one (good) principle (i.e., that of truthfulness), and who has given up (all thought of) the other world.

11

177. Truly, misers do not get to the world of the gods. (Only) the spiritually immature do not praise giving. The wise man rejoices in giving, and therefore is happy in the hereafter.

12

178. The Fruit of Stream Entry is better than sole sovereignty over the earth, (better) than going to heaven, (better) than lordship over all the worlds.

# The Enlightened One

1

179. That Enlightened One whose sphere is endless, whose victory is irreversible, and after whose victory no (defilements) remain (to be conquered), by what track will you lead him (astray), the Trackless One?

2

180. That Enlightened One in whom there is not that ensnaring, entangling craving to lead anywhere (in conditioned existence), and whose sphere is endless, by what track will you lead him (astray), the Trackless One?

3

181. Those wise ones who are intent on absorption (in higher meditative states) and who delight in the calm of renunciation, even the gods love them, those thoroughly enlightened and mindful ones.

4

182. Difficult is the attainment of the human state. Difficult is the life of mortals. Difficult is the hearing of the Real Truth (*saddhamma*). Difficult is the appearance of the Enlightened Ones.

5

183. The not doing of anything evil, undertaking to do what is (ethically) skilful (*kusala*), (and) complete purification of the mind – this is the ordinance (*sasana*) of the Enlightened Ones.

6

184. Patient endurance is the best form of penance. 'Nirvana is the Highest,' say the Enlightened Ones. No (true) goer forth (from the household life) is he who injures another, nor is he a true asketic who persecutes others.

7

185. Not to speak evil, not to injure, to exercise restraint through the observance of the (almsman's) code of conduct, to be moderate in diet, and to occupy oneself with higher mental states – this is the ordinance (*sasana*) of the Enlightened Ones.

8

186. Not (even) in a shower of money is satisfaction of desires to be found. ‘Worldly pleasures are of little relish, (indeed) painful.’ Thus understanding, the spiritually mature person

9

187. takes no delight even in heavenly pleasures. The disciple of the Fully, Perfectly Enlightened One takes delight (only) in the destruction of craving.

10

188. Many people, out of fear, flee for refuge to (sacred) hills, woods, groves, trees, and shrines.

11

189. In reality this is not a safe refuge. In reality this is not the best refuge. Fleeing to such a refuge one is not released from all suffering.

12

190. He who goes for refuge to the Enlightened One, to the Truth, and to the Spiritual Community, and who sees with perfect wisdom the Four Ariyan Truths –

13

191. namely, suffering, the origin of suffering, the passing beyond suffering, and the Ariyan Eightfold Way leading to the pacification of suffering –

14

192. (for him) this is a safe refuge, (for him) this is the best refuge. Having gone to such a refuge, one is released from all suffering.

15

193. Hard to come by is the Ideal Man (*purisajanna*). He is not born everywhere. Where such a wise one is born, that family grows happy.

16

194. Happy is the appearance of the Enlightened Ones. Happy is the teaching of the Real Truth (*saddhamma*). Happy is the unity of the Spiritual Community. Happy is the spiritual effort of the united.

17

195. He who reverences those worthy of reverence, whether Enlightened Ones or (their) disciples, (men) who have transcended illusion (*papanca*), and passed beyond grief and lamentation,

196. he who reverences those who are of such a nature, who (moreover) are at peace and without cause for fear, his merit is not to be reckoned as such and such.

XV

# Happiness

1

197. Happy indeed we live, friendly amid the haters. Among men who hate we dwell free from hate.

2

198. Happy indeed we live, healthy amid the sick. Among men who are sick we dwell free from sickness.

3

199. Happy indeed we live, content amid the greedy. Among men who are greedy we dwell free from greed.

4

200. Happy indeed we live, we for whom there are no possessions (*kincanas*). Feeders on rapture shall we be, like the gods of Brilliant Light.[11]

5

201. Victory begets hatred, (for) the defeated one experiences suffering. The tranquil one experiences happiness, giving up (both) victory and defeat.

6

202. There is no fire like lust, no blemish like demerit (*kali*), no suffering like the taking up of the (five) constituents (of conditioned existence), no happiness like peace.

7

203. Hunger is the worst disease, conditioned existence the worst suffering. Knowing this as it really is (one realizes that) Nirvana is the highest happiness.

8

204. Health is the highest gain, contentment the greatest riches. The trustworthy are the best kinsmen, Nirvana is the supreme happiness.

9

205. Having enjoyed the flavour of solitude and tranquillity, free from sorrow and free from sin, one enjoys the rapturous flavour of the Truth (*dhamma*).

10

206. Good it is to see the spiritually developed (*ariyas*); to (actually) dwell with them is always happiness. By not seeing the spiritually immature, one indeed will be perpetually happy.

11

207. By living in company with the spiritually immature one grieves for a long time. Association with the spiritually immature is always painful, like association with an enemy. Association with the wise is pleasant, like the coming together of relatives.

12

208. (Therefore it is said:) Follow one who is wise, understanding, and learned, who bears the yoke of virtue, is religious and spiritually developed (*ariya*). Follow one of such a nature, as the moon follows the path of the stars.

xvi

# Affections

1

209. Devoting himself to the unbefitting and not devoting himself to the fitting, he, rejecting the (truly) good and grasping the (merely) pleasant, envies those who are devoted to the (truly) good.

2

210. Don’t associate with the dear, and never with the undear. Not seeing those who are dear is painful, (as is) seeing those who are not dear.

3

211. Therefore let nothing be dear to you, for separation from the dear is (experienced as an) evil. There exist no bonds for those for whom there is neither the dear nor the undear.

4

212. From the dear arises grief; from the dear arises fear. For the one who is wholly free from the dear there exists no grief. Whence (should) fear (come)?

5

213. From affection (*pema*) arises grief; from affection arises fear. For one who is wholly free from affection there exists no grief. Whence (should) fear (come)?

6

214. From (sensual) enjoyment (*rati*) arises grief; from (sensual) enjoyment arises fear. For one who is wholly free from (sensual) enjoyment there is no grief. Whence (should) fear (come)?

7

215. From (lustful) desire (*kama*) arises grief; from (lustful) desire (*kama*) arises fear. For one who is wholly free from (lustful) desire there is no grief. Whence (should) fear (come)?

8

216. From craving arises grief; from craving arises fear. For one who is wholly free from craving there is no grief. Whence (should) fear (come)?

9

217. People hold him dear who is perfect in right conduct (*sila*) and vision (*dassana*), who is principled (*dhammattha*) and a speaker of the truth, and who carries out his own (spiritual) tasks.

10

218. He is called ‘One whose stream goes upward’[12] in whom is born an ardent aspiration (*chanda*) after the Undefined, whose mind (*manasa*) would be permeated (by the thrill of his progress so far), and whose heart (*citta*) is unattached to sensual pleasures.

11

219. When a man long absent (from home) returns safely from a distant place, his relatives, friends, and well-wishers rejoice exceedingly at his return.

12

220. Similarly, his own good deeds receive him when he goes from this world to the other (world) as relatives (receive) a dear one on his return (home).

xvii

# Anger

1

221. Let one give up anger, renounce conceit, (and) overcome all fetters. Suffering does not befall him who is unattached to name-and-form (*namarupa*: i.e., psychophysical existence), (and) who is without (material or mental) possessions (*akincana*).

2

222. I call him a charioteer who holds back the arisen anger as though (holding back) a swerving chariot. Others are only holders of reins.

3

223. Overcome the angry by non-anger; overcome the wicked with good. Overcome the miserly by giving, the teller of lies with truth.

4

224. Speak the truth; do not get angry; give your mite to those who ask (for alms). On these three grounds one goes into the presence of the gods.

5

225. Those silent sages who are harmless (*ahimsakas*) and always (self-)controlled go to the Immoveable Abode, whither having gone they do not grieve.

6

226. They come to the end of (their) defilements (*asavas*), those who keep awake, who study day and night, (and) who are intent on Nirvana.

7

227. This is an old story, Atula,[13] not just one of today. They blame him who is taciturn; they blame him who is talkative; they even blame him who speaks in moderation. There is no one in the world who is not blamed.

8

228. There has not been, nor will there be, nor is there anyone now, who is absolutely blamed or absolutely praised.

9–10

229–230

Who is entitled to blame that man who is like (a coin of) Jambunada gold,[14] a man who is praised by the wise, by those who have tested him day by day; one who is free from faults, a man of understanding, (and) whose wisdom and understanding are (well) integrated? Even the gods praise such a man. By Brahma, too, is he praised.

11

231. Be on your guard against bodily agitation; be controlled in body. Giving up bodily misconduct, live well behaved as regards the body.

12

232. Be on your guard against verbal agitation; be controlled in speech. Giving up verbal misconduct, live well behaved as regards speech.

13

233. Be on your guard against mental agitation; be controlled in mind. Giving up mental misconduct, live well behaved as regards the mind.

14

234. They are the perfectly restrained ones, the wise who are controlled in body and speech, (together with) the wise who are controlled as regards the mind.

xviii

# Stains

1

235. You are now like a withered leaf; Death’s men have approached you. You stand at the door of departure, and you do not even have provisions for the road.

2

236. Make a lamp (or: island) for yourself; strive quickly, (and) become one who is spiritually mature. With stains removed, (and) free from blemish, you will reach the celestial plane (*bhumi*) of the spiritually developed (*ariyas*).

3

237. You are now of advanced age; you have gone forth into the presence of Death. There is no (resting) place for you in between, (and) you do not even have provisions for the road.

4

238. Make a lamp (or: island) for yourself; strive quickly, (and) become one who is spiritually mature. With stains removed, (and) free from blemish, you will not undergo repeated birth and old age (any more).

5

239. The man of understanding removes his stains gradually, little by little, and from moment to moment, just as the silversmith (removes) the impurities of silver.

6

240. Just as rust springing from iron, (having) sprung from that eats it (away), even so his own actions lead the transgressor to an evil state (*duggati*).

7

241. Non-repetition is the stain of the (orally transmitted) sacred verses (*mantas*). Inactivity (in maintaining them) is the stain of houses. Sloth is the stain of beauty (of complexion). Heedlessness is the stain of one who guards.

8

242. Misconduct is the stain of a woman. Stinginess is the stain of one who gives. (Both) in this world and the other (world) stains are indeed evil things.

9

243. A greater stain than these is ignorance (*avijja*), which is the supreme stain. Abandoning this stain, be stainless, almsmen.

10

244. He has an easy life who is shameless, impudent as a crow, disparaging (of others' merits), obtrusive, arrogant, (and) of a corrupt way of life.

11

245. Life is hard for one with a sense of shame, who always seeks purity, who is unattached (or: strenuous), who is humble (and) of a pure way of life, and discerning.

12

246. Whoever in (this) world (of ours) destroys life, tells lies, takes what is not given, resorts to the wives of others,

13

247. and is addicted to the drinking of intoxicants (*surameraya*), that man in this world himself digs up his own roots (of merit).

14

248. Know this, good man: Evil ways are perceptible (as such). Don't let greed and unrighteousness subject you to prolonged suffering.

15

249. People give (alms) according to their faith and at their good pleasure. One who is discontented about the food and drink of others does not attain concentration (*samadhi*), be it by day or by night.

16

250. One in whom this (kind of attitude) is extirpated, (it being) destroyed at its roots (and) abolished, he attains concentration (*samadhi*), be it by day or by night.

17

251. There is no fire like lust. There is no grip like anger. There is no net like delusion. There is no river like craving.

18

252. The faults of others are easily seen; one’s own faults are seen with difficulty. One winnows the faults of others like chaff, but one covers up one’s own as a dishonest gambler (covers up) a losing throw (of the dice).

19

253. He who pays attention to the faults of others (and) is always irritable, his defilements (*asavas*) grow. He is far from the destruction of the defilements.

20

254. There is no track in the sky. There is no (true) asketic outside (this Teaching). The race of men delight in illusion (*papanca*). The Tathagatas (i.e., the Buddhas or Enlightened Ones) are free from illusions.

21

255. There is no track in the sky. There is no (true) asketic outside (this Teaching). There are no conditioned things that are eternal. There is no vacillation in the Enlightened Ones.

# The Man of Principle

1

256. He is not a ‘man of principle’ (*dhammattha*) who rashly judges what is advantageous (*attha*). The spiritually mature person who judges both what is advantageous and disadvantageous –

2

257. who judges others impartially, carefully, and in accordance with principle – that man of understanding, guarded of principle, is said to be ‘a man of principle’.

3

258. A man is not spiritually mature (or: learned) merely because he talks a lot. He is said to be spiritually mature who is secure (in himself), friendly, and without fear.

4

259. He is not a vessel of the Teaching (*dhammadhara*) merely because he talks a lot. He who, having heard only a little, personally sees the Truth, he (truly) is a ‘vessel of the Teaching’, that man who is not neglectful of the Teaching.

5

260. A man is not an elder (among almsmen) because his head is grey. Though of mature age, he is called ‘grown old in vain’.

6

261. He is (truly) called an elder (among almsmen) in whom are truth and principle, (together with) harmlessness (*ahimsa*), (self-)control (and) restraint, (and) who is without stain and wise.

7

262. One who is jealous, miserly, and dishonest is not accounted ‘good’ (*sadhurupa*) merely by reason of his speechifying or beautiful complexion.

8

263. He is said to be ‘good’ (*sadhurupa*), that fault-free man of understanding, in whom this (kind of behaviour) is extirpated, it being destroyed at its roots (and) abolished.

9

264. A man who is without (religious) observances (and) who speaks what is false is not an asketic (merely) by reason of his shaven head.

10

265. He who stills (*sameti*) all his evils, small and great, is said to be an asketic (*samana*) because those evils have been stilled.

11

266. One is not an almsman (merely) because he begs (alms) from others. One is not an almsman (merely) because of having adopted a bad (teaching).

12

267. He is said to be an almsman who lives in the world with discrimination (*sankha*), having by means of the spiritual life (*brahmacariya*) set aside merit and demerit.

13–14

268–269 One who is confused and ignorant does not become a silent sage (*muni*) merely by observing silence. But that spiritually mature person who, as if holding a pair of scales, accepts the best and rejects the evil, *he* is a silent sage. He is a silent sage for that (very) reason. He is (also) called a silent sage (*muni*) because he understands (*munati*) both worlds.

15

270. A man who harms living beings is not one who is spiritually developed (*ariya*). He is said to be spiritually developed who is harmless towards all living beings.

16–17

271–272 Without having attained to the destruction of the defilements (*asavas*), almsman, you should not rest content with rules of conduct and religious observances, with the attainment of concentration (*samadhi*), or with living in seclusion, nor with (thinking) ‘I enjoy the bliss of emancipation (that is) unknown to ordinary people.’

XX

# The Way

1

273. Best of ways is the Eightfold (Way). Best of truths are the Four (Truths). Passionlessness is the best of (mental) states. The Man of Vision (*cakkhuma*) is the best of bipeds.

2

274. This indeed is the Way; there is no other that leads to purity of vision. Enter upon the Way; this Way is the bewilderment of Mara.

3

275. Following this Way you will make an end of suffering. This indeed is the Way proclaimed by me ever since I knew how to draw out the darts (of craving).

4

276. By you must the zealous effort be made. The Tathagatas (i.e., the Buddhas or Enlightened Ones) are only proclaimers (of the Way). Those who are absorbed (in higher meditative states) (eventually) win release from the bondage of Mara.

5

277. 'All conditioned things are impermanent.' When one sees this with insight (*panna*) one becomes weary of suffering. This is the Way to Purity.

6

278. 'All conditioned things are painful.' When one sees this with insight (*panna*) one becomes weary of suffering. This is the Way to Purity.

7

279. 'All things (whatsoever) are devoid of unchanging selfhood.' When one sees this with insight (*panna*) one becomes weary of suffering. This is the Way to Purity.

8

280. One who does not make use of his (spiritual) opportunities, who, though young and strong, is lazy, weak in aspiration, and inactive, such a lazy person does not find the way to insight (*panna*).

9

281. Guarded in speech, as well as controlled in mind, let one do no (ethically) unskilful thing with the body. Purifying these three avenues of action, let him attain the Way made known by the sages.

10

282. From application (*yoga*) arises the (spiritually) great (*bhuri*). From lack of application the (spiritually) great wanes. Having known these two avenues of increase and decrease (of the great) let him so establish himself that the great may flourish.

11

283. Cut down the (whole) forest, not (just) one tree. From the forest arises fear. Cutting down both wood and brushwood, be 'out of the wood', almsman.

12

284. To the extent that one has not cut down the last little bit of this 'brushwood' of (the craving of) man for woman, to that extent his mind will be fettered, as the sucking calf to its mother.

13

285. Cut off your sticky affection, as one plucks with one's hand the white autumnal lotus. Develop the Way of Peace, the Nirvana taught by the Happy One.

14

286. 'Here shall I stay during the rains, here in the cold season and the hot.' Thus thinks the spiritually immature person. He does not understand the dangers (to life).

15

287. That infatuated man whose delight is in offspring and cattle, death goes and carries him off as a great flood (sweeps away) a sleeping village.

16

288. Sons are no protection, nor father, nor yet (other) relatives. For him who is seized by the End-maker (i.e., Death), there is no protection forthcoming from relatives.

289. Knowing the significance of this, let the spiritually mature person, the man restrained by good conduct, speedily cleanse the Way leading to Nirvana.

# The Miscellaneous

1

290. If by renouncing a limited happiness one would see an abundant happiness, let the spiritually mature person, having regard to the abundant happiness, sacrifice the limited happiness.

2

291. He who, contaminated by (his) association with hatred, seeks happiness for himself by inflicting suffering on others, is not released from hatred.

3

292. What is to be done, that is neglected; what is not to be done, that is done. Of those who are arrogant and heedless the defilements increase.

4

293. Those who ever earnestly practise mindfulness with regard to the body, not following after what is not to be done (and) steadfastly pursuing what is to be done, of these mindful and fully attentive ones the defilements come to an end.

5

294. Having slain mother and father and two warrior kings, and having destroyed a kingdom together with the (king's) revenue collector, the brahmana goes free from sin.[15]

6

295. Having slain mother and father and two learned kings, and having killed a tiger as the fifth, the brahmana goes free from sin.[16]

7

296. Wide awake they always arise (in the morning), the disciples of Gotama, (those) who day and night are constantly mindful of the (virtues of the) Buddha.

8

297. Wide awake they always arise (in the morning), the disciples of Gotama, (those) who day and night are constantly mindful of the (qualities of the) Dhamma.

9

298. Wide awake they always arise (in the morning), the disciples of Gotama, (those) who day and night are constantly mindful of the (characteristics of the Arya) Sangha.[17]

10

299. Wide awake they always arise (in the morning), the disciples of Gotama, (those) who day and night are constantly mindful of the (transitory nature of the) body.

11

300. Wide awake they always arise (in the morning), the disciples of Gotama, (those) who day and night delight in non-injury (*ahimsa*).

12

301. Wide awake they always arise (in the morning), the disciples of Gotama, (those) whose mind day and night delights in meditation (*bhavana*).

13

302. It is difficult to go forth (from home to the homeless life); and difficult to delight therein (once one has gone forth). (At the same time) household life is painful, (and) painful, likewise, is living together with those who are (one's) peers. Travellers (on the road of birth, death, and rebirth) are oppressed by suffering, so do not be (such a) traveller oppressed by suffering.

14

303. He who is perfect in faith and good conduct, (and) possessed of fame and wealth, he is honoured everywhere, to whatever country he resorts.

15

304. Like the Snowy (Mountain Range), the good are visible even from afar. The wicked are not seen, like arrows shot in the night.

16

305. He who sits alone, lies down alone (and) walks alone, without weariness, (and) who strives, (all) alone, to subdue himself, (he) will take delight in the (solitude of the) forest.

# The Woeful State

1

306. One who tells lies arises (by way of rebirth) in a state of woe, as does one who, having done something, says ‘I don’t do (that sort of thing).’ These two sons of Manu (the Primeval Progenitor),[18] men of base actions, on departing (this life) have the same (painful destiny) in the other world.

2

307. Many ‘yellow-necks’ (i.e., wearers of the yellow robe)[19] are of bad qualities (or: of an evil disposition) and uncontrolled. These bad people, on account of their bad deeds, arise (after death) in a state of woe.

3

308. Better to swallow a flaming, red hot ball of iron, than to be an immoral, uncontrolled man living on the almsfood of the land.

4

309. A heedless man who resorts to the wives of others comes by four (evil) states: acquisition of demerit; not sleeping (soundly) as desired; thirdly, blame; (and) fourthly, (rebirth in) a state of woe.

5

310. (The result is) acquisition of demerit and a wretched (future) course; the short-lived enjoyment of an apprehensive man with an apprehensive woman; also the king imposes a heavy penalty. Therefore let not a man resort to another’s wife.

6

311. Just as (sharp-edged) kusa grass, wrongly taken hold of, cuts the hand, so the life of a religieux, wrongly grasped, drags down to a state of woe.

7

312. Any unprincipled act, and any sullied religious observance – a (slack) spiritual life (*brahmacariya*) filled with suspicion – this is of little benefit.

8

313. If you have something to do, attack it vigorously. One who lives the homeless life half-heartedly scatters much dust of passion around.

9

314. An ill deed is better left undone, (for) an ill deed torments one afterwards (with remorse). Better done is a good deed, having done which one is not (so) tormented.

10

315. Like a frontier city well-guarded within and without, so guard yourself. Let not the (fortunate) moment (of human birth etc.) pass you by. Those who allow the fortunate moment to pass by grieve when they go to the woeful state.

11

316. Those who are ashamed of what is not shameful, (and) not ashamed of what is shameful, such beings, taking upon themselves wrong views, go to an evil state.

12

317. Those who see what (morally) is not fearful as fearful, and who see what (morally) is fearful as not fearful, such beings, taking upon themselves wrong views, go to an evil state.

13

318. Those who think what (morally) is blameable not blameable, and who see what (morally) is not blameable as blameable, such beings, taking upon themselves wrong views, go to an evil state.

14

319. Knowing the (morally) blameable as blameable, and the (morally) free from blame as blameless, those beings, taking upon themselves right views, go to a happy state.

xxiii

# The Elephant

1

320. I shall patiently endure abuse, just as the (trained) elephant endures in battle the arrow (shot) from a bow. The many are indeed ill-natured (or: badly behaved).

2

321. The tamed (elephant) is led to the assembly; the king mounts the tamed (elephant). Among men, best is the (self-)controlled person who patiently endures abuse.

3

322. Trained mules are best, also (equine) thoroughbreds of Sindh, and the mighty (fighting) elephants. (But) best of all is the self-controlled man.

4

323. One does not go to the unfrequented realm by such vehicles as these, as does a controlled one go (to it) by means of a well-subdued, disciplined self.

5

324. The elephant called Dhanapala is difficult to restrain when his temples are streaming with must (in the time of rut). Shackled, he refuses (his) food. The tusker remembers the (delightful) elephant forest.

6

325. When one is sluggish and gluttonous, given to sleep, (and) a roller-about like a great hog fed on grains, such a stupid person goes again and again to a womb (to be reborn).

7

326. Formerly this mind (of mine) went wandering about where it wished, as it liked, (and) according to its pleasure. Today I will control it radically, as the wielder of the (elephant driver's) hook restrains the (rutting) elephant.

8

327. Be delighters in non-heedlessness. Keep watch over your mind. Lift yourself clear of the difficult road (of the mental defilements), as an elephant sunk in a bog (hauls himself out).

9

328. Should you get a sensible companion, one who is fit company (for you), who behaves well, and is wise, (then) go about with him joyous and mindful, overcoming all (external and internal) dangers.

10

329. Should you not get a sensible companion, one who is fit company (for you), who behaves well, and is wise, (then) go about alone, like a king forsaking a conquered country, (or) like an elephant (living solitary) in the Matanga forest.

11

330. It is better to go about alone; there is no companionship with the spiritually immature. Going about alone one commits no sins, like an elephant living unconcerned in the Matanga forest.

12

331. Friends are good in time of need. Contentment is good in every way. At the end of life (a store of) merit is good (or: a meritorious action is good). Good is the leaving behind of all suffering.

13

332. Here reverence for mother is good; reverence for father is also good. Here reverence for asketicism is good; reverence for holiness is also good.

14

333. The lifelong practice of virtue (*sila*) is good. A (firmly) established faith (in the Three Jewels) is good. Good is the getting of wisdom (*panna*). The non-doing of evil is good.

xxiv

# Craving

1

334. The craving of the man who lives carelessly increases like the maluva creeper. He runs from existence to existence, like a monkey in the jungle (leaping from tree to tree) in search of fruit.

2

335. Whoever in the world is overcome by this wretched, adhesive craving, his sorrows grows like the birana grass that is rained upon.

3

336. Whoever in the world overcomes this wretched, adhesive craving, so difficult to overcome, his sorrows fall from him like drops of water from the lotus leaf.

4

337. I tell you this: Be of good cheer, as many of you as are here assembled. Dig out the root of craving, as the seeker of the usira (digs out) the birana grass. Don’t let Mara (the Evil One) break you again and again as a river (in spate) breaks the reed.

5

338. Just as a felled tree shoots (up) again if the root is uninjured and stout, so this suffering (of ours) arises again and again if the propensity to craving is not destroyed.

6

339. The currents of his passion-based thoughts carry him away, that man of wrong views for whom the thirty-six streams (of craving)[20] flowing towards what is pleasurable are strong.

7

340. The streams (of craving) flow everywhere, (and) the creeper (of craving) having sprung up remains (clasping its objects). Seeing that creeper sprung up, sever its root with (the knife of) wisdom (*panna*).

8

341. Delights arise for a being, (delights) that rush on and are saturated (with craving). Those seekers after pleasure who are attached to what is agreeable, those men are indeed bound for (re)birth and old age.

9

342. Attended upon by craving, the race of men run about in terror like a trapped hare. Fettered and bound (as they are), suffering befalls them again and again for a long time.

10

343. Attended upon by craving, the race of men run about in terror like a trapped hare. Therefore let him allay craving, the almsman who is desirous of his own freedom from passion.

11

344. Just look at him, the man who having been delivered from the jungle of craving (i.e., from the household life) and drawn to (the life of) the jungle, (nonetheless) having been thus delivered from the jungle (of craving) runs (from the jungle) to the jungle (of household life). Freed, he runs (back) to (his former) bondage.

12

345. That is not a strong bond, say the wise, which is made of iron, wood, or (plaited) grass. Passionate fondness for jewelled earrings, (and) longing with regard to sons and wives –

13

346 that is a strong bond, say the wise. It drags one down, is loose (fitting) yet difficult to be got rid of. This (bond) they too cut off, those longing-free ones who, giving up sensual pleasures, go forth (from the household life).

14

347. The passionately lustful man falls back into the torrent (of repeated existence), just as the spider returns to (the centre of) its web (after running out and feeding on a trapped fly). This too the wise man cuts off and renounces; free from longing, he leaves behind all suffering.

15

348. Give up what is ‘before’ (in time), give up what is ‘after’, give up what is ‘in between’. Crossed to the Further Shore of existence, (and) with mind wholly released, you will undergo birth and decay no more.

16

349. For the person of disturbed thinking, whose passions are acute, and who looks (only) for what is 'lovely', craving grows apace.

17

350. He who delights in calming down (his) thinking, who meditates on the ('lovely' as being truly) unlovely, (and) who is always mindful, he will cut through the bond of Mara (the Evil One).

18

351. The one who has arrived at (spiritual) perfection, who is devoid of fear, free from craving, and without (moral) blemish, (that person) has wrenched out the darts of (mundane) existence. This is the last body (he will wear).

19

352. One who is free from craving, not grasping, skilled in the explanation of (doctrinal) terms, and who would understand the words (of the Buddha's Teaching) in context, that person is truly called 'a wearer of his last body', 'very wise', (and) 'a great man'.

20

353. I am all-conquering, all-knowing, (and) in all respects unstained. All-abandoning, freed through the destruction of craving, (and) having by myself thoroughly comprehended (the destruction of craving), whom should I point out (as my teacher)?[21]

21

354. The gift of the Dhamma surpasses all gifts. The taste of the Dhamma surpasses all tastes. Delight in the Dhamma surpasses all delights. The destruction of craving overcomes all suffering.

22

355. Possessions strike (down) the man of evil understanding, but not those who are seekers of the Beyond. Because of his craving for possessions, the man of evil understanding strikes himself (down) as if he were striking (down) others.

23

356. Weeds are the blemish of (cultivated) fields, lust of this (human) race. Hence what is given to those free from lust is productive of much fruit (in the shape of merit).

24

357. Weeds are the blemish of (cultivated) fields, hatred of this (human) race. Hence what is given to those free from hate is productive of much fruit (in the shape of merit).

25

358. Weeds are the blemish of (cultivated) fields, delusion of this (human) race. Hence what is given to those free from delusion is productive of much fruit (in the shape of merit).

26

359. Weeds are the blemish of (cultivated) fields, covetousness of this (human) race. Hence what is given to those free from covetousness is productive of much fruit (in the shape of merit).

XXV

# The Almsman

1

360. Restraint with the eye is good; good is restraint by the ear; restraint by the nose is good; good is restraint with the tongue.

2

361. Bodily restraint is good; good is restraint in speech; restraint of the mind is good; good in all respects is restraint. The almsman who is in all respects restrained is freed from all suffering.

3

362. He is truly called an almsman whose hands are controlled, whose feet are controlled, whose speech is controlled, who is controlled in thought (or: supremely controlled), whose delight is within, (and) who is collected, solitary, content.

4

363. The utterance is sweet of that almsman who controls his mouth, who speaks in moderation, who is not puffed up (with his knowledge), (and) who explains the meaning (of the Buddha's words) and their practical application.

5

364. An almsman who abides in the Teaching, who delights in the Teaching, who reflects on the Teaching, and who bears the Teaching in mind, will not fall away from the True Teaching (*saddhamma*).

6

365. Let one not despise what he has gained (by way of alms); let him not live envying the gains of others. The almsman who envies the gains of others does not attain to (meditative) concentration.

7

366. Even if an almsman's gains (by way of alms) be very little, let him not despise what he has gained. The gods praise him who is of pure livelihood (and) unwearied.

8

367. He is indeed called an almsman for whom nowhere in the mind and body is there anything of which to say 'This is mine,' and who does not grieve for what does not (really) exist.

9

368. The almsman who dwells in loving-kindness, (and) who is happy in the mandate of the Buddha, would attain to the state that is peace (i.e., Nirvana), to the quieting of conditioned existence (and) to bliss.

10

369. Almsman, empty this boat! Emptied, it will go more (quickly and) lightly for you. Having cut out lust and hatred, you will then go to Nirvana.

11

370. Cut away five, abandon five, (and) in addition cultivate five. The almsman who has transcended the five attachments is called 'One who has crossed the flood'.[22]

12

371. Be absorbed (in higher meditative states), almsman! Don't be heedless. Don't allow your mind to whirl about among sensual pleasures. Don't through heedlessness swallow a (red hot) iron ball, (and then) when it scorches you cry out 'What torment!'

13

372. There is no absorption in higher meditative states (*jhana*) for one who is without wisdom (*panna*); there is no wisdom for one who is unabsorbed in higher meditative states. He in whom are found (both) absorption in higher mental states and wisdom is truly in the (very) presence of Nirvana.

14

373. For the almsman who enters an empty cottage, who is of peaceful mind, and who perfectly comprehends the Dharma, there is a joy surpassing that of men.

15

374. Howsoever one grasps (the fact of) the rise and fall of the aggregates (of conditioned existence), he attains a joy and delight that, to the discerning person, is (as) nectar.

16

375. Here (in the world) the first thing for the wise almsman is this: control of the senses, contentment, restraint through observance of the (almsman's) code of conduct, and association with friends who are virtuous, of pure life, (and) energetic.

17

376. Let one be hospitable (and) well-mannered. Being on this account full of happiness one will make an end of suffering.

18

377. Just as the jasmine (creeper) sheds its withered flowers so, almsmen, should you totally get rid of lust and hatred.

19

378. He who is tranquil in body, tranquil in speech, (and) possessed of (mental) tranquillity, who is well integrated, (and) who has left behind worldly things – such an almsman is said to be at peace.

20

379. Yourself reprove yourself. Yourself examine yourself. Thus self-guarded (and) mindful the almsman will live happily.

21

380. One is one's own protector; what other protector should there be? Therefore control this self of yours as a trader (manages) a noble steed.

22

381. The almsman who is full of joy (and) happy in the instruction of the Buddha will attain to the State of Peace, to the blissful allaying of (mundane) conditions.

23

382. A youthful almsman, even, who commits himself to the Buddha's instruction, lights up the world like the moon (when) freed from cloud.

xxvi

# The Brahmana

1

383. Exert yourself and cut off the stream;[23] do away with sense-desires, brahmana. Having known the destruction of mundane conditionings, be a Knower of the Unmade, brahmana.

2

384. When the brahmana has ‘crossed over’ in respect of the two states, (i.e., calm and insight), then all the fetters of that knowing one come to an end.

3

385. I call him a brahmana for whom there exists neither the Further Shore nor the hither shore, nor both, (and) who is without distress and free from (all) bonds.

4

386. I call him a brahmana who is absorbed (in higher meditative states), who is unstained (by passion), whose task is done, who is free from the defilements (or: unbiased), (and) who has reached the Ultimate Goal.

5

387. The sun shines bright by day; the moon shines at night; the armed warrior shines bright; the brahmana who is absorbed (in higher meditative states) shines bright. But the Buddha shines bright by day and by night, (shining) with splendour.

6

388. ‘Brahmana’ means one who ‘bars out’ evil; he is said to be an asketic (*samana*) who lives in quiet (*sama*); he is said to be a ‘goer forth’ (from the household life) who has ‘sent forth into banishment’ his own impurities.[24]

7

389. One should not strike a brahmana, nor should the brahmana (who is struck) give vent (to anger). Shame on (or: woe to) him who strikes a brahmana! More shame on (or: woe to) him who gives vent (to anger).

8

390. For a brahmana there is nothing better than a mind restrained from (its) likings. To the extent that the harming mind turns back (from harming), to that extent suffering is stopped.

9

391. I call him a brahmana by whom no evil is done by the body, by speech, (or) by the mind, and who with regard to these three is restrained.

10

392. As a brahmin worships the sacrificial fire, so let one pay homage to the person from whom one comes to know the Truth (*dhamma*) taught by the Perfectly Enlightened One.

11

393. One is not a brahmana on account of matted hair, or (one's) clan, or birth. He in whom there exists both truth and principle (*dhamma*), *he* is pure, *he* is a brahmana.

12

394. What use (your) matted hair, (you) man of evil understanding; what use your deerskin garment? Within, you are a dense jungle (of passions), (yet) you touch up the outside.

13

395. The man who wears rags from a dust heap, who is lean, whose veins stand out all over the body, (and) who, alone and in the forest, is absorbed (in higher meditative states), *him* I call a brahmana.

14

396. I do not call him a brahmana who is (merely) womb-born or sprung from a (brahmin) mother. If he is a man of possessions (*sakincana*) he is (simply) called 'one who addresses others familiarly'. I call him a brahmana who is free from attachment and without possessions (*akincana*).

15

397. I call him a brahmana who, having severed all bonds, does not tremble, and who has unburdened himself of all attachments.

16

398. I call him a brahmana who has severed the bond (of hatred), the thong (of craving), and the cord (of wrong views) together with its concomitants, who has lifted the crossbar (of ignorance), (and) who is Enlightened.

17

399. I call him a brahmana who, being good, patiently endures abuse, flogging, and imprisonment, and whose strong army is the strength of patience.

18

400. I call him a brahmana who is without anger, who (scrupulously) observes (religious) vows, who is ethical, free from lust, (and) controlled, (and) who wears his last body.

19

401. I call him a brahmana who, like (a drop of) water on a lotus leaf, or a mustard seed on the point of an awl, does not cling to (lit., is not smeared with) sensuous pleasures.

20

402. I call him a brahmana who in this very life has personally known the destruction of suffering, who has laid down the burden (of conditioned existence), (and) who is detached (from the world).

21

403. I call him a brahmana whose knowledge is deep, who is a man of understanding, who knows what is and what is not the Way, (and) who has reached the Supreme Goal.

22

404. I call him a brahmana who socializes with neither householders nor homeless ones (*anagarikas*), who lives free from attachment (lit., lives houseless), (and) who desires little or nothing.

23

405. I call him a brahmana who has abandoned violence towards living beings, be they moving about or stationary (or: whether trembling and afraid or firm-minded), and who neither slays nor causes (others) to slay.

24

406. I call him a brahmana who is conciliatory among the antagonistic, peaceful among those who have recourse to violence (*danda*), (and) who is unattached among the attached.

25

407. I call him a brahmana from whom lust, hatred, pride, and hypocrisy have fallen away like a mustard seed from the point of an awl.

26

408. I call him a brahmana who would utter gentle, instructive, true speech by which one would give offence to no one.

27

409. I call him a brahmana who takes, in this world, nothing that is not given (to him), be it long or short, small or great, pleasant or unpleasant.

28

410. I call him a brahmana in whom are found no longings either for this world or the other (world), who is (utterly) free from longings (and) who is released from all defilements.

29

411. I call him a brahmana who, through perfect knowledge, is free from doubts, (and) who has achieved the plunge into the Deathless (*amata*).

30

412. I call him a brahmana who here (in this world) has transcended good and bad, together with attachment, and who is free from sorrow, without passion, (and) pure.

31

413. I call him a brahmana who is spotless and pure as the moon, clear(-minded) and undisturbed (by the defilements), and in whom delight (in conditioned existence) has been extinguished.

32

414. I call him a brahmana who has passed over this dangerous (or: muddy) track (of the passions), this fortress of delusion that is repeated existence, who has crossed (the flood) and reached the Further Shore, who is absorbed (in higher meditative states), who is passionless and free from doubts, (and) who, being without (further) clinging, is at peace (in Nirvana).

33

415. I call him a brahmana who, having here (in the world) given up the pleasures of sense, goes forth as a homeless one, and who has destroyed (craving for) sensuous existence.

34

416. I call him a brahmana who, having here (in the world) given up craving, goes forth as a homeless one, and who has destroyed craving for (conditioned) existence.

35

417. I call him a brahmana who, having discarded human bonds and transcended celestial bonds, is delivered from all bonds (whatsoever).[25]

36

418. I call him a brahmana who has given up attachment and aversion, become tranquil (lit., cool), (and) free from the substrates (of conditioned existence), (and who thus is) a hero victorious over the whole world.

37

419. I call him a brahmana who knows, in every way, the passing away and arising of living beings, who is unattached, living happily, and Enlightened.

38

420. I call him a brahmana whose track gods, celestial musicians,[26] and human beings do not know, that (supremely) worthy one who has destroyed the defilements.

39

421. I call him a brahmana for whom there is nothing before, or after, or in between, who is without (material or mental) possessions, (and) who is unattached.

40

422. I call him a brahmana who is foremost (among men), excellent, heroic, a great sage, the victorious one, the one who is passionless, washed (clean of the defilements), (and) Enlightened.

41

423. I call him a brahmana who knows his previous lives (lit., abodes), who sees heaven and the state of woe, who has reached the extinction of births, who is a silent sage, a master of the higher knowledge (*abhinna*), (and) who has accomplished all that is to be accomplished.

# Notes

1 In Buddhist mythology, Mara is the ruler of the realm of sense desire (*kamaloka*) as Brahma is the ruler of the realm of archetypal form (*rupaloka*). He is the Evil One (*papima*), representing as he does the forces that obstruct the attainment of Enlightenment.

2 ‘Here’ (*idha*) refers to this world and ‘there’ (*pecca*) to the next world.

3 A.P. Buddhadatta Maha Thera (*Dhammapadam*: An Anthology of the Sayings of the Buddha, Colombo, n.d., p.6) comments: ‘This is the only place in the Pali where where this word [*sahitam*] occurs to indicate “literature”. It is doubtful whether this was used here to mean the same thing. Another possibility here is to take this as two words *sa* and *hitam* instead of one. If we take it as two words we have to translate it as:

“Though much he speaks about beneficial things”.’

4 The Immortal or Deathless (*amata*) is a synonym for Nirvana.

5 Like Cupid, Mara is thought of as carrying a bow and arrows, and his arrows are ‘flower-tipped’, the flowers being the pleasures of sense.

6 Kusa-grass was used in Vedic rituals, hence ‘sacred’.

7 I follow Buddhadatta (*op.cit.* p.19) in taking *muccati* to mean ‘release’, not ‘curdle’.

8 The Factors of Enlightenment (*bodhi-angas* or *bojjhangas*) are mindfulness (*sati*), investigation of mental states (*dhamma- vicaya*), energy (*viriya*), rapture (*piti*), tranquillity (*passadhi*), concentration (*samadhi*), and equanimity (*upekkha*).

9 According to tradition, these two verses were spoken by the Buddha immediately after his attainment of Enlightenment.

10 The ‘path of the sun’ (*adiccapatha*) is the sky.

11 The gods of Brilliant Light (*abhassara-devas*) in Buddhist mythology are a class of gods occupying in the celestial hierarchy a place immediately above the various Brahmas. Their subjective or ‘psychological’ counterpart is the second *jhana* or ‘absorption’.

12 ‘One whose stream goes upward’ (*uddhamsuto*) is one the current of whose being is directed towards Nirvana.

13 Atula was a layman who blamed various bhikkhus in the ways mentioned by the Buddha.

14 ‘Jambunada gold’ is gold from the river of that name.

15 The ‘mother’ is craving (*tanha*), the ‘father’ self-conceit (*mana*), the ‘two warrior kings’ are the two wrong views of eternalism and annihilationism, the ‘kingdom’ comprises the twelve bases (*ayatanas*), i.e., the six sense organs, including the mind, and their respective objects, while the ‘revenue collector’ (*sanucara*) is the passionate delight that arises in dependence on the twelve bases. Here ‘Brahmana’ is synonymous with Arahant.

16 The ‘two learned kings’ are the two wrong views of eternalism and annihilationism, the tiger is doubt (*vicikiccha*), which also happens to be the fifth hindrance (*nivarana*).

17 Here the Sangha is the Arya Sangha, consisting of those of the Buddha’s disciples, past, present, and future, who are Stream-Entrants, Once-Returners, Non-Returners, and Arahants. To these the Mahayana would add the great Bodhisattvas.

18 Manu is the Primeval Progenitor of Vedic tradition, and a ‘son of Manu’ is therefore a human being (cf. the expression ‘children of Adam’).

19 A ‘yellow-neck’ (*kasavakantha*) is a wearer of the yellow robe of the almsman (*bhikkhu*).

20 The ‘thirty-six streams (of craving)’ are the three kinds of craving (*tanha*) – for sense pleasures, for existence, and for non-existence – multiplied by the six internal plus the six external bases (*ayatanas*).

21 These are the words with which according to the *Ariyapariyesana-sutta* (*Majjhima-Nikaya* 26), the Buddha responded when asked by a naked ascetic, shortly after his Enlightenment, who was his teacher.

22 The five that are to be ‘cut away’ are the fetters (*samyojanas*) of self-view, doubt, dependence on moral rules and religious observances, lust, and ill will. These five bind one to the realm of sense-desire. The five that are to be ‘abandoned’ are the fetters of desire for existence in the realm of archetypal form, desire for existence in the formless realm, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. These bind one to the realm of archetypal form and the realm of formlessness. The five that are to be ‘cultivated’ are the five spiritual faculties (*indriyas*) of faith, wisdom, concentration, energy, and mindfulness.

23 The ‘stream’ (*sota*) is the process of repeated birth, death, and rebirth.

24 In this verse there is a play upon words which I have tried to reproduce.

25 Human bonds (*manusaka-yogas*) are the desire for continued existence, or rebirth, in the human realm; ‘celestial bonds’ (*dibba-yogas*) are the desire for rebirth in the realm of the gods.

26 In Buddhist mythology ‘celestial musicians’ (*gandhabbas*) are a class of gods inhabiting the realm of the Four Great Kings. They are so called because they live on scent (*gandha*).

# Glossary

*Aggregate*: (Pali, *khandha*) All phenomena are ‘compounded’ or ‘put together’, and are therefore aggregates of other phenomena. Traditionally, these are divided into five types: form (*rupa*), feeling (*vedana*), perception (*sanna*), volition (*sankhara*), and consciousness (*vinnana*).

*Brahma*: The most powerful and longest lived of all the ‘gods’, q.v.

*Brahmana*: See Note 15.

*Conditioned existence*: (*paticcasamuppada*) Everything arises in dependence upon conditions, thus the mundane world is spoken of as conditioned existence.

*Deathless*: (*amata*) a synonym for Nirvana (q.v.).

*Defilements*: (*asavas*) The biases toward sensuous experience (*kama*), conditioned existence (*bhava*), speculative opinions (*ditthi*), and ignorance (*avijja*).

*Dhamma*: The Truth; the teaching of the Buddha.

*Eightfold Way*: One way of describing the path leading to Enlightenment, consisting of Perfect Vision, Perfect Emotion, Perfect Speech, Perfect Action, Perfect Livelihood, Perfect Effort, Perfect Awareness, and Perfect Samadhi.

*Empty*: (*sunna*) Absolute reality is not ‘conditioned’ or ‘compounded’ of anything, and is therefore described as Empty.

*Fetters*: See Note 22.

*Four (Ariyan) Truths*: These are the fundamental truths of Buddhism: the existence of unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*), craving (*tanha*) as its cause, its cessation (*nirvana*), and the way leading to its cessation (the Eightfold Way, q.v.)

*Further shore*: (*para*) a synonym for Nirvana (q.v.).

*Gods*: (*devas*) Beings that dwell on the higher, more blissful, planes of existence. See also Note 11.

*Immoveable*: (*accuta*) a synonym for Nirvana (q.v.).

*Noble Ones*: (*ariyas*) Those who have gained Enlightenment or are shortly to do so, consisting of Stream-Entrants (q.v.) (*sotapannas*), Once-Returners (*sakadagamis*), Non-Returners (*anagamis*), and Enlightened beings (*arahants*).

*Nirvana*: (Pali *nibbana*) lit., 'blowing out'; the extinguishing of all the fires of craving. Nirvana or Enlightenment is the goal of all Buddhists.

*Perfectly Awakened One*: (*sammasambuddha*) The Buddha.

*Stream Entry*: (*sotapatti*) The point at which one has established transcendental insight such that one can no longer fall away from the path. Traditionally, Enlightenment will then be attained within a maximum of seven more lifetimes.

*Supernormal powers*: (*iddhi*) the powers and influence that emanate from a highly concentrated state of mental absorption.

*Unmade*: (*akata*) That which is not compounded or conditioned, i.e., Nirvana.

# Further Reading


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